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# SOCIAL ACTION



*Race Against Humanity*

by CHARLES S. JOHNSON





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**Eternal** is the title of the Cuban sculpture on the cover of this issue. The photograph is by courtesy of the Pan American Union, Washington.

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# THE PEOPLE, ONE

BY LISTON POPE

In his opening address to the present Congress, President Roosevelt pointed out that—

The issue of this war is the basic issue between those who believe in mankind and those who do not. . . . There have always been those who did not believe in the people, who attempted to block their forward movement across history, to force them back to servility and suffering and silence.

The people have now gathered their strength. They are moving forward in their might and power—and no force, no combination of forces, no trickery, deceit or violence, can stop them now. They see before them the hope of the world—a decent, secure, peaceful life for men everywhere.

## *World-Shaping Forces*

In these words President Roosevelt pointed to powerful forces which are seldom captured in the daily headlines but which underlie the events those headlines depict and shape the conclusions they portend. Floods of aspiration are lifting oppressed peoples around the globe. Given channels in which to flow freely, these titanic forces may sweep tyranny and oligarchy before them. Dammed up, they may inundate not only Western civilization but all hope for an orderly world for generations to come. Contemporary society stands at a critical watershed of history, and the barriers it has erected against anarchy hang by a thread.

It is always an oversimplification to identify any one factor as responsible for the unleashing of social forces. Many associated developments have brought the world to its present crisis. Economic inequities, political perversities, spiritual blindness, and many other cruel failures have entered into creation of our world conflict. Just as there have been many causes of our plight, so there must be many different approaches to solution of it, rather than simple-minded devotion to a single cure.

Unusual importance must be attached, however, to the influence and the portent of racial discrimination in the present world. The war cannot be neatly summarized as a "racial war," but, as Professor Johnson indicates, issues of race are indissolubly bound into the background of the war and the possibilities of a durable peace. Either a European-American civilization must be expanded into a world civilization or be plunged into a deepening maelstrom of conflict and chaos.

The rise of ethnic self-consciousness at home and abroad poses insistent problems for the white majority in the United States. Either our belief in democracy must continue to be traduced by our practice, or we must face up to the implications of the political creed and the ethical ideals we profess. It has been observed that all men are God's children and a majority of them are colored, and figures in Professor Johnson's article substantiate this observation. If we really propose to extend democracy throughout the world, therefore, the white people had better begin immediately to demand the safeguarding of minorities everywhere, because they themselves will comprise a minority if a world democracy is attained. The white man has been largely responsible for the development of faith in democracy, and for teaching this faith to the world. Can he rightly blame the peoples of the world if they press for the realization of the ideals he has taught?

### *Ethical Demands*

In terms of political units smaller than the world as a whole, the same issues obtain. Presumed "Anglo-Saxons" represent a bare majority, if that, of the population of the United States, though so-called "whites" comprise a considerable majority. In the British Empire some seventy-five million white people dominate nearly five hundred million non-whites. In the Dutch Empire some ten or twelve million whites rule over sixty million colored people. A similar situation prevails in most of the great world powers. To make actual practice consistent with political



profession is an inescapable challenge for each of the democratic nations as they are constituted at present. As Vice-President Wallace urged in a speech in November, "Ethnic democracy, built from the heart, is perhaps the greatest need of the Anglo-Saxon tradition."

The fundamental reasons for justice between races go deeper than canons of logical consistency and political expediency. They rest on ethical considerations, which in turn are finally rooted in a religious faith (whether or not it is specifically designated as such) concerning the meaning of man's life on the earth. The Christian churches of America, by virtue of the very faith they profess, must face squarely the racial injustices of the world, or else confess by their failure to do so that they do not seriously entertain the faith they admonish.

The past record of American churches with respect to race problems, while it contains a few enheartening chapters, has on the whole been a spectacle of irresolute decision and sorry performance. It is probable that the acceptance of immigrant groups in American life has been furthered by big-time intercollegiate football and other sports more than by the Christian churches. The -owski's and -aggio's of the lineup have been heroes for all Americans. It is probable that far more is being done by trade unions at present to break down barriers against the Negro than by the churches of America.

*The Committee on Intercultural Relations* of the Council for Social Action has been constituted to help represent and implement the concern of Congregational Christian churches in the field of racial responsibility. The term "intercultural relations" is not intended to indicate that the problems are vague and general in character. It points simply to the fact that "race" conflicts are basically "culture" conflicts, with the identity of a racial group being defined largely in terms of cultural notions and social practices rather than by biology. The definition of race for the social scientists is little more than a series of statistical averages which have little relevance to a particular family

or a group of people. "Race" becomes a convenient handle on which to hang all sorts of cultural conflicts—political, economic, religious, or whatnot—rather than being a basic sub-stratum out of which these conflicts are produced. The definition of "races" is more largely a social notion than a work of nature; anybody who is significantly "different from us" is likely to be designated a member of another and inferior race. As a sailor once told an anthropologist, "Dagoes is anybody wot isn't our sort of chappies."

The Committee on Intercultural Relations is happy to present in this issue of *Social Action* several significant documents. The major article is written by Professor Charles S. Johnson, one of America's outstanding sociologists who is professor of Social Sciences at Fisk University. Professor Johnson is not only an expert on race problems; he is also a wise and courageous leader in efforts at their solution. He has long been known as a leader in the Congregational Christian churches; he has been since 1938 the chairman of the American Missionary Association Division Committee, and is also at present a valued member of the Committee on Intercultural Relations.

At a meeting of eight interdenominational bodies in Cleveland during the second week of December, a special series of sessions was devoted to consideration of "The Spiritual Implications of Race and Culture in Our Democracy." The program was arranged by a committee under the chairmanship of Dr. Emory Ross of the Foreign Missions Conference of North America; many groups and agencies cooperated in planning for the meeting and were represented at the sessions. A record of the proceedings was compiled by Dr. Dwight Bradley, and is contained herein. Speeches made by A. Philip Randolph, International President of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, and Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver of Cleveland are also reprinted here, under the conviction that their challenge should resound in churches across the land.

The Committee on Intercultural Relations will make other

study material available from time to time, and will take such direct action as it deems appropriate to its status and function, in an effort to promote racial justice now and in the post-war world. It covets reports on significant programs in any community, and suggestions for making its own work and that of the churches more effective. It may be, as more than one speaker suggested at the recent meeting in Cleveland, that the church will prove unequal to the racial challenge that confronts her. The answer lies with us.

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# RACE AGAINST HUMANITY

BY CHARLES S. JOHNSON

For more than a century social and ideological forces in Europe and America have been moving steadily to a critical world issue of race and politics. This theme has been inherent, if not dynamic, in the expansion of European populations over the world, the extension of capitalistic imperialism, the conquest and exploitation of non-European peoples, and the emergence of a strict and rigorous ideology of race superiority. In all this welter of military strategy, of morale and of war aims, the ideology of race is inescapable, and presents itself as perhaps the most important and dangerous force in the world today. For all of the paradox of the situation, it is set firmly in the path of the forces of humanity.

## *The Blot on the Escutcheon*

As events shape themselves more sharply against the backdrop of a global war it becomes more and more evident that the forces of racial, economic and political imperialism are related; and these have been in conflict with the two most vital of our living philosophies: the principle of democracy and the Christian ethic. We are bound to reflect soberly over our narrow and disastrous conception of a moral order in the world when we recall that only a generation ago, at the end of the first World War, Dr. Wellington Koo of China and Baron Makino of Japan pleaded together before the body framing the League of Nations Covenant, that this Covenant recognize the fundamental principle of equality before the law for all peoples without regard to race or color. This plea was rejected, to the everlasting shame of the conquering nations of the Western World. The penalty of this decision is upon us now, in a war that involves tragically the millions of this generation.

Racial inequalities, the denial of brotherhood, the assumptions and assertions of racial superiority have been in the world a long time. What is of most disturbing significance, however, is that the Nazi philosophy, which has been described as a blend and vulgarization of Prussianism, Romanticism, racialism and Nietzscheism, has organized these ideas as a dynamic part of Nazi Germany's own plan of world conquest and domination. In thus exploiting racism, with characteristic vigor and thoroughness, the Nazi philosophy has revealed its revolting features and its inevitable threat to civilization itself.

One of the extraordinary results of the interplay of race, economics and politics is the present sharpened alignment of the peoples of the world for and against the preservation of the democratic principle of life and government. The fact that whites, browns, blacks and yellows are fighting together against whites, browns and yellows is sometimes pointed to as evidence that this is not a racial war. But the issues involved in the present alignment of races and cultures and nationalities around the principles of freedom and equality hold a portent quite as serious as that of a racial war, and yet at the same time offer us our last best hope of peace and security in the post-war world.

Race in itself, even if it could be scientifically defined, has little biological importance. There have always been rationalizations of the lust for power, for other peoples' land and goods and labor. Once it was made a matter of religious differences. But the employment of racism as the rationalization of gross distinctions between peoples is of our own time and civilization. Only a self-conceived and imposed fatalism would damn irrevocably at birth all those who do not conform to a given head-form, skin-color and hair-texture and who, incidentally, can, by their degraded status and lack of the specific instruments of power, be made to serve the ends of other peoples.

No reputable scientist today can support the claims of these



super-racists, and history itself refutes the arguments employed to justify the injustices practiced and the superiorities alleged. But the popular beliefs and feelings associated with race continue to be among the most devastating forces in the modern world. They are acutely manifested in the barbaric campaign of anti-Semitism begun in Germany and resulting, according to Dr. Stephen S. Wise, in the annihilation, through murder and starvation, of more than two million Jews in Europe in the course of the present war. They appear in the imperial policy of England in India, in the colonial policies and structures of European nations in Africa, in the Caribbeans and in the Pacific. They appear in the unequal status accorded by England and the United States to their most powerful and vital Oriental ally, the Chinese, and even in the problems of oppressed "Nationalists" in Palestine, Ireland and Brittany. They appear in the state laws and public policies regarding the Negro minority in the United States, the anti-Oriental policy of the American government so obviously responsible for the bitterness that finally found violent and destructive outlet at Pearl Harbor; in the racial policy of Australia and South Africa. They appear in the revealing incidents of treachery to white rule in Burma and Singapore.

The theories designed to explain and support dominance either by Germanic or Anglo-Saxon groups have led naturally to the fantastic creations of Aryanism or Nordicism, on the one hand, and the "Yellow Peril" on the other. The race issue is latent in the somewhat pale and blurred definition of war aims set forth in the Atlantic Charter. On the day following the announcement in England of the terms of the Atlantic Charter by a spokesman for the Prime Minister, this official addressed a group of West African students and ventured the statement that "you will find their principles apply, I believe, to all peoples of the world." Three weeks later the Prime Minister himself stated to the House of Commons, "At the Atlantic meeting we had in mind primarily the restoration of

the sovereignty, self-government and national life of the states and nations of Europe now under the Nazi yoke, and the principles governing any alteration in the territorial boundaries which may have to be made."

### *Areas of Tension*

There are at least six major areas in which problems of race and color are becoming urgently important: (a) in China and India, with a total population of over eight hundred and fifty million, on whose numbers and resources very largely depends the success of the war; (b) in the South and Central American countries with their large Indian and mixed populations; (c) in the Pacific Islands so long under the imperial domination of Europe and America; (d) in Africa, with more than a hundred and fifty million people, all but a small handful of whom are colonial subjects of Europe; (e) in Japan, a present active enemy, determined to wrest control of Asia from the West; and (f) in the dispersed colored populations in the white settlements of the world like those in the United States and South Africa.

Over the past century, and particularly since the first World War, there has been a gradual awakening of the masses everywhere. The first active phases of the contact of Europe with the Orient, with Latin America, the islands of the Pacific and with Africa were inspired by an imperialistic urge. To increase the effectiveness and thoroughness of this exploitation it was necessary both to disrupt the cultural and economic life of the non-European peoples, and to force upon them various educative devices by way of incorporating them functionally into a sector of the life of the West. The schools, churches, industrial and technical devices which followed have had their results. They have broken down the cultural isolation of the peoples of the world. Modern inventions have reduced space. The radio, motor cars and airplanes, created a vital economic interdependence by the very insistence for world markets, and



a cultural interdependence and exchange through the ubiquitous motion picture, and the very ease and logic of inter-communication.

What is most important today is the fact that Western aggression, from whatever motivation, has broken down the tribal barriers among the non-European peoples, and has laid the ground for a new race consciousness which is manifesting itself in resistance to white domination. The choice today is no longer one of extending conquests and racial controls, but of deciding whether to continue to fight an unmoral and self-annihilating battle for maintaining white supremacy, or to direct the current of conflict into channels for realizing the common aims of all mankind. In a sense, the very struggle of race against race has, as Professor Hans Kohn points out, given an impetus to the unification of mankind.

### *Whose Freedom?*

Today, China, India and Africa are fighting for the same goals of freedom and independence and equality of status as are the peoples of England and the United States. If it ever becomes evident that the ultimate end of an allied victory is merely an Anglo-Saxon rather than a Germanic control over the peoples of the world, we shall not only lose completely the confidence of the millions of non-whites who are supporting the principle of freedom, but we shall lose faith, also, in our own morality and in ourselves.

The resistance to the race thesis of Europe and America has created for the first time a racial solidarity among all the non-white peoples which holds perilously the promise of either a continuing and uselessly destructive conflict, or the first real basis in history for a world civilization. For over a thousand years there had been little intercourse between India and China. Their internal problems and their relations with Europe and America were basically different. But China's magnificent and sustained struggle within itself for democracy and, against

Japan, for its own freedom, has bound it in alliance with the West. A free and strong China is vital to the well-being of America, but this presupposes a willingness to regard a potentially powerful ally as an equal. Our racial policy toward the Chinese, however, stands as a major contradiction of this thesis.

The most conspicuous of the barriers close at hand are the Oriental Exclusion Law which bars Chinese immigrants from this country; the "barred zone" clauses of the Immigration Act of 1917; the Immigration Act of 1924, which excludes aliens not eligible for citizenship; other provisions which single out Orientals for "categorical discrimination"; and the extra-territorial jurisdiction in China itself which has been referred to again and again as an arrogant expression of "racial imperialism."

All efforts to erase this racial insult have so far met with failure. This sustained racial policy has led Dr. Charles Nelson Spinks to say that "we cannot inspire confidence in our efforts to make this a better world for humanity if our own laws and policies so glaringly place the Asiatic races in a definite category from the rest of humanity."<sup>1</sup> Dr. Taraknath Das, a distinguished Indian, in discussing the freedom of Asia, makes the serious charge of a persistent double standard of international morality, and insists that this was part of the cause of the collapse of the last peace. Despite all of the concern for democracy, the question of the freedom of the peoples of Egypt, India, Burma, Indo-China, the Dutch Indies and Korea was strictly tabooed. He argues that there is no lack of force in the present-day world order. But this force is used brutally or covertly to deny human freedom to vast multitudes of the world population. The Nazis use this force openly. Other nations, though denouncing Nazi practices, nevertheless follow the same practice in matters of racial discrimination under the cloak of one justification or another.

As China's status is America's responsibility, so India stands

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1. Charles Nelson Spinks, "Repeal Chinese Exclusion," *Asia*, February 1942.



as Britain's responsibility. The rise of nationalism in India has challenged age-old British control. The unwillingness to relinquish this control and treat the Indian peoples as equals makes of them uncooperating neutrals. It is not alone that India's right to the freedom and equality sought for Europe and America is being retarded by this racial policy. For now both Britain and the United States rely upon India's freedom for their own free existence and defense. India's war potentials are estimated as being equal to the combined resources of China and Japan.<sup>2</sup> It was manifestly a wrong racial policy that lost the allegiance and confidence of Hong Kong, the Malay Peninsula, Singapore and the Dutch East Indies. And Japan is capitalizing on these mistakes.

For the first time in its twenty-five years the magazine *Asia* recently carried an article on the situation of the American Negro. The reason given for this amendment of policy was significant, and helps to explain some of the new and irresistible forces moving in the world today. It was done because, in the opinion of the editors, the American Negro is now an inescapable part of the world situation in which millions of colored Asiatics are allies of America in a war for democracy. If Americans should ask, as some have done with troubled conscience, "Are we fighting to save England's imperial grip on the colored peoples of Asia and Africa?" so also honest Britons could ask, "Are we fighting to save an American democracy that denies equality to 13,000,000 colored Americans?" Further, the Chinese and Indians have the right to say, "If we, as colored peoples, fight side by side in the cause of freedom, we have the right to ask 'Whose freedom?' "

### *The Day of Equal Peoples*

Let us look squarely at the present racial map of the world. There are about 480,000,000 Europeans in Europe and about 160,000,000 in other parts of the world. This expansion of Europe

2. Taraknath Das, "Asia's Part in War and Peace," *Annals*, July 1942.

has been in progress since 1500 and we are only now aware that the limits of expansion have definitely been reached. In this new global inter-relationship, so tragically marked by military conflict, there are 500,000,000 Orientals, 450,000,000 Indians, 150,000,000 Africans and their descendants, and 40,000,000 Indians in the Americas, chiefly in Latin America.

The usual assumption is that the United States is, with a few such conspicuous exceptions as the Negro and the Oriental, an Anglo-Saxon country. Yet, as Dr. Nicholas John Spykman points out, the Caucasian majority in the United States represents neither racial nor cultural homogeneity. Actually only about 57 per cent of the population can by a stretch be considered in the Anglo-Saxon category. There are in the population all of the sub-races of Europe and all of the nationalities of that continent and the Near East. In addition to the 13,000,000 Negroes and 2,000,000 Mongoloids represented by the 200,000 Orientals and Indian and mixed Mexican and Indian populations, there are 4,500,000 Jews, 13,000,000 foreign-born and 25,000,000 persons of foreign or mixed parentage.

The Caribbean and South American countries are even more mixed in their populations. The neighboring islands of the West Indies are predominantly Negro, and the South American countries as a whole are very largely Indian and Mestizo. Ninety per cent of the population of Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia are Indians and Mestizos. Brazil has a large Negro population. Argentina, Uruguay and Chile are the only countries in this group with a predominantly white population.

Significantly, the up-surge of the masses in these countries, and the appearance of a new nationalism, are portents of the re-orientation of this part of the world to a new and more democratic social order. The success of our good-neighbor policy in Latin America is conditioned more strongly than we have yet realized by the ability of the United States to give sincere recognition to this new order and to the colored populations which constitute the body of the nations. Diplomacy and economics



alone cannot provide the internal cohesion necessary for hemispheric solidarity. Underneath our present differences and lack of mutual confidence is still the factor of race and color.

It is obvious that much of the indisposition to change rests in the forlorn desire to perpetuate and even strengthen the imperialistic grip upon areas of the world defined from our own point of view as technically backward. There are vested interests in colonial control which, like vested interests everywhere, are difficult to sacrifice even for a principle. Government is simplest when it can be autocratic and, to preserve this autocracy, racial arrogance and strict social differentiation have been found useful.

The least objectionable rationalization of this autocracy is paternalism. In this Great Britain has perhaps been most conspicuous among the European colonizing nations. Its theory of colonial government has held in it a measure of responsibility for the welfare of the peoples controlled and, in some instances, an ultimate objective of self-government. But the time factor has been indefinite, and the methods of control have been such as to accentuate the race factor and increase the resistance to the policy itself. Experience is now teaching, against the logic of imperial aims, that the whole structure of these relationships is outmoded and requires redefinition.

In most of the discussions of peace and the new world order there is a conspicuous omission of Africa. Presumably this is due to the fact that unlike China or India the whole of Africa is, with very minor exceptions, parcelled out to European countries as colonies. There are differences among these colonies with respect to internal development and the degree of native participation in government and self-determination. There have been some assets and many liabilities in this monopoly and exploitation of the resources of Africa. Some of the more valuable contributions to the situation have been made by Christian missionaries who have, in an ultimate sense, helped to cushion the shock of the shattering impact of Europe in Africa. Roads

have been developed, sanitary improvements have been installed and some schools have been provided. These, while aiding the African, have also been designed as aids to the European policy of dominance. However, these developments in Africa, as in India and elsewhere, have without design introduced conceptions of freedom and equality which, far from being satisfied, have been categorically denied.

Today it is very clear that there are no moral grounds for a colonial policy in Africa which does not make the welfare and self-determination of the Africans its coordinate concern. It is exceedingly difficult for any single nation to generate of itself a true democratic concern for the liberties of other peoples, despite the fact that world economics as well as politics increasingly make such autonomy and freedom essential to any sound and enduring peace.

In any provisions for the structure of peace in a new world framework, such transition to independence will almost of necessity have to come not through the benevolence or paternalism of any one nation, but through an international trusteeship which has as its primary objective the righting of the predatory wrongs of the past three centuries. There is no more powerful argument against the incapacity for self-rule in Africa, in effective functional cooperation with the democracies, than is provided currently by the Free French colonies under the Negro Governor-General, Felix Eboué.

Fortunately, in the United States there are a few strong and insistent personalities who see beyond the immediate delusions of political expediency. Mr. Wendell Willkie, after his return from Russia and China, said with an almost inspired vigor of prophecy: "The day is gone when men and women of whatever color or creed can consider themselves the superiors of other creeds and colors. The day of vast empire is past. The day of equal peoples is at hand." Pearl Buck, after calling attention to the use by Japan and Germany of American race prejudice for propaganda purposes, has warned that our allies,

India, China, the Philippines and Malaya, are waiting for the United States and England to make clear the stand of the white people toward them; whether this really is a struggle for human equality, total justice, or a democracy limited to white people only.

Dr. Alvin Johnson reflects that historians of the future will see in the present global war the final death throes of a civilization developed along racial lines. To quote his recent article in the *Yale Review*, "There will be romantic historians who will regret the passing of an order in which an ordinary, perhaps even dull-witted, white man could still pride himself on his lack of pigment as a clear claim to superiority. There have been romantic, indeed noble, episodes in the resolute carrying of the white man's burden, but the realistic historian will appraise the immense enrichment of life throughout the world that must follow upon the breakdown of the psychological barriers between nation and nation, race and race. World civilization will be harder to understand, but better worth understanding."<sup>3</sup>

Vice-President Wallace in his famous "Common Man" address to the world has asserted, "The people are on the march toward even fuller freedom than the most fortunate peoples of the world have hitherto enjoyed. The peace must mean a better standard of living for the common man, not merely in the United States and England, but also in India, Russia, China and Latin America—not merely in the United States, but also in Germany and Italy and Japan. No nation will have the God-given right to exploit other nations."

Our astute Under-Secretary of State, Mr. Sumner Welles, has added this far-reaching and inclusive observation: "Our victory must bring in its train the liberation of all peoples. Discrimination between peoples because of their race, creed or color must be abolished. The age of imperialism is ended. The principles of the Atlantic Charter must be guaranteed to the world as a whole—in all oceans and in all continents."

3. Alvin Johnson, in the Winter 1942 issue of the *Yale Review*.



It is clearly recognized by our more enlightened statesmen and moral leaders that unless we as a nation take into account the minority rights of peoples in all nations we cannot preserve our freedom at home. This principle, however, is by no means clear even yet to those ardent defenders of the old order, who still insist with vehemence and with a disquieting volume of unreflecting popular support that social justice is utopian and impractical, that racial segregation and discrimination are necessary measures of control, that civilization is to be preserved not by extending its benefits but by restricting these benefits to a chosen few.

### *Putting Our Own House in Order*

The United States is today perhaps the greatest single power in the world, in wealth, resources, technical ingenuity, and in its position as the international capital of the Allies. In the present world conflict it has perhaps as little as any great nation direct imperialistic and colonial aims, and has the nearest approach to a humanitarian concern for the survival of the democracies in a world of force. The policy of this nation in the Philippines is hailed as the only colonial policy consistent with the national principles of democracy and freedom.

The importance of the moral position of the Nation is reflected in the serious suggestions that the United States might arbitrate the difficult and embarrassing stalemate involving the imperial problems of Britain in India and the demands of India for freedom. In a recent debate on the India question, on the nation-wide program of the Town Hall of the Air, following the proposal that the United States mediate the Anglo-Indian issue, a Canadian in the audience put a very searching question. Obviously some mutually trusted power is needed to break a deadlock that is both morally confusing and militarily dangerous. But, the questioner asked, could the United States feel free to do this while practicing a similar policy with reference to some thirteen million Negroes and to other thousands of non-whites in its own country; and could England in good con-

science be granted a similar privilege of finding a moral solution of the American race problem?

This query raised for the thoughtful American more issues than any debate could settle. For, at the moment of our greatest military effort to secure freedom and democracy for the rest of the world, it was necessary for a special branch of the War Manpower Commission to compel employers to use vitally essential Negro manpower in industry; a small and rabidly undemocratic Southern bloc in Congress was hamstringing the efforts of Government and honest liberals to extend the right of democratic suffrage in the States by abolishing the poll tax, and other politicians were running for office on anti-race issues which in any ethical sense could be regarded as sedition. Indeed, with the first favorable war news for the United Nations there was such an upsurge of anachronistic reaction in both Britain and America that Pearl Buck voiced the gloomy fear before a group of Nobel Prize winners that this had ceased to be a war for freedom,—that it was a war, not to *save civilization*, but only to save Western civilization.

We may win the war and dictate the peace, but unless our participation in the war succeeds in giving reality to the democratic principles for which men are being asked to die, the sacrifice of the silenced thousands of our youth will have been of little avail. Unless the peace that follows is one devoid of the plaguing exclusions and restrictions of people because of race and color, it can only be what Thomas Mann so trenchantly describes as an exhausted intermission between two catastrophes.

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## “THE SPIRITUAL IMPLICATIONS OF RACE AND CULTURE IN OUR DEMOCRACY”\*

*The first session was held on Tuesday, December 8th, in the ball room of the Hotel Statler. W. W. Alexander, Chief of the Minority Groups Branch, War Manpower Commission, presided. The first speaker was Liu Liang-Mo, former secretary of the Y.M.C.A. in China. His subject: "The Christian's Responsibility For Right Religious And Cultural Relations in China."*

“People are dying or are dead everywhere in the world,” he said, “and we are losing the significance of Man. To us numbers are becoming only numbers. We think of masses and forget men. Yet men are the most important things in the world.

“Why? What have we done? What is wrong with us? The answer is: Men around the world do not know each other. They have nothing to do with each other. Who is there of us that has a global mind?

“When God made men in many colors, why did he do so? Why did God make flowers in many colors? Or why do women dress in many colors? I think it is God’s color scheme, that he made us in many colors. Some are very dark. Some are very light. I, being Chinese, am only medium.

“The Chinese are not interested only in themselves. They are interested in all other people. They are interested to see that fair treatment is given also to Negroes in the United States. The Chinese are interested to see that fair treatment is given to all.

“Some people say that Missions have failed. Have they failed? No—and I say this as a product of Missions. Who but the missionaries ‘shouted their heads off’ to stop isolationism and selling scrap to Japan? Who warned you that you would have to give up your silk stockings today or give up your sons tomorrow? Now the women of America have to give up

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\*Findings of the meeting held in Cleveland, Ohio, December 8-9, 1942. Auspices of the Eight Cooperating Interdenominational Bodies.



both. Now the Second Avenue elevated that used to be in New York is fighting the Sixth Avenue elevated in the Pacific Ocean. (Referring to the fact that scrap from the 6th Avenue El was sold to Japan while that from the 2nd Avenue El is now being used for war production in the United States.)

"It is true that only one per cent of Chinese are Christians. But as for quality—fifty per cent of Chinese in 'Who's Who' are either Christians or graduates of Christian Colleges.

"But Missions have a weakness. The weakness of Missions is denominationalism. When too much emphasis is put on denominations, Christianity loses its significance. Another weakness is the 'bossy' type of missionary. Also those that come like people from away up high in heaven and preach to us down below. This is bad—a half-ignorant and half-patronizing attitude. Another weakness is the uncritical attitude missionaries sometimes have toward China. It is too partisan to make sense. China needs to be criticized by its friends. Missionaries should not always say only good things about China—should be critical as intelligent Chinese are critical of China's faults.

"These are some suggestions for Missions in the future:

- 1—Preach more Christian unity and less denominationalism.
- 2—Make Christianity as Chinese as possible, and know Chinese culture.
- 3—Identify Missions with the people.

"I identify myself as a Chinese with the aspirations of the Negroes in America and of the people in India."

*The second speaker was A. Philip Randolph, International President of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters. His subject was: "The Negro in American Democracy." The effect of Mr. Randolph's address was electrifying. At its conclusion the "Wings Over Jordan" radio choir was introduced and sang a number of spirituals. Interrupting the applause which followed*

*the singing, which was particularly fine, Mr. Alexander, the chairman, stepped to the edge of the platform and said:*

*"They have offered us their songs over the years. What have we to offer them? I sometimes think it would be a good thing if the Negroes stopped singing for ten years. Then we might not be soothed into this comfortable feeling, and might be willing to face the real problem."*

*It was thought by many that this drastic statement by the chairman had saved the situation and kept the session from deteriorating into a purely romantic or sentimental state of mind in respect to the Negroes whose problem had been presented by Mr. Randolph with almost epic power and truly prophetic insight.*

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## THE NEGRO IN AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

BY A. PHILIP RANDOLPH

The problem of the Negro is a problem of discrimination, segregation, and jim-crow in the economic, political and social life of America. It has its roots in world movement, namely, the slave trade of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and the exploitation of slave labor in the production of sugar, rice, tobacco and cotton in the new world.

### *After the Civil War*

The Civil War—America's second or bourgeois revolution—was uncompleted, and hence unlike the bourgeois revolution of nineteenth century Europe, failed to transform the black slaves into free workers and independent peasant proprietors. Vestiges and remnants of a pre-capitalist era hedge in, circumscribe and encumber the freedmen, giving them the status of second-class citizens.

The historic mission of the old, classic bourgeois revolution is to achieve a metamorphosis of the social, economic and po-

litical status of the serf or slaves. But this can only be effected when the following changes occur:

1. Overthrow of the slave or feudal power and state apparatus,
2. Set-up of a republican or democratic form of government,
3. Grant the former slave or serf the right of suffrage,
4. Provide for the participation of the freedmen in the new government,
5. Establishment of a free public school system,
6. Bestowment upon the former slave of an economic basis for his adventure into the new social order.

In very truth, however, none of these conditions pre-requisite to the completion of the traditional political bourgeois revolution, was realized for the Negro. Hence, the status of the Negro people today is that of second-class citizens, the victims of dual standards of justice, freedom and democracy.

When the industrial and financial capitalist economy gained ascendancy over the agrarian feudal slave pattern of production, following the triumph of the Union army over the Confederate forces, the orderly and progressive march of the bourgeois revolution was halted and the attention of the American national community was turned from the social idealism of consummating the liberation of the former slave to the matter-of-fact, Yankee business of consolidating the Union as a political agency to subserve the interest of an incipient and nascent monopoly capitalism.

Thus, the freedom of the Negro slaves was sacrificed upon the altar of an expanding capitalistic economy. In negation of its basic tenets, the church reflected the dominant economic trends in the American scene and blessed this tragic political opportunism. The church of the South served as a psychological weapon to whip public sentiment into accepting the second-class civil status of the Negro people and the church of the North winked and connived at this bit of religious expediency. Nor has Protestantism or Catholicism or the Republican or Democratic party of America from Abraham Lincoln to the



New Deal ever seriously and effectively challenged this socio-economic and political-racial arrangement.

Thus, the Civil War, or the main American social revolution, fell short of conformity to the typical Eighteenth Century revolutionary liberal political scheme of change. Although it broke down the framework and economic power and mastery of the old slave regime, the former slave masters remained as the personnel managers or padrones of the absentee northern and eastern investment bankers and business entrepreneurs, and proceeded with vengeance, hatred, and greed for economic gain, political advantage and social prestige and security, to devise engines of persecution, deception and oppression to deprive the freedmen of their newly found liberties. We, therefore, witnessed the rise of peonage or a form of involuntary servitude, the company store or the turpentine still, the lumber camp and the cotton plantations, vagrancy laws, convict labor, grandfather clauses, white primaries, poll taxes, lynching-mob law and Ku Kluxism, racial discrimination segregation and jim-crow, bi-racial public and private schools and churches—all constituting a well-defined system for freezing the Negro in the status of inferior economic, occupational and civil citizenship.

### *Un-Christian Practices*

The white church of America subscribes to this policy in practice if not in theory by maintaining a religious ceremonial dualism for white and black Christians. When the test of Christian brotherhood came, a corrosive and deadening spirit of complacency drugged the life of religious America. Refuge and solace may be found in sonorous and eloquent sermons about the brotherhood of man, but in reality they are almost pure hypocrisy, for the doors of the white church with few exceptions are shut in the face of the black Christian worshippers.

Because of this anomalous and incredible policy of the white Christian church, the government, private industry and labor

unions get extenuation for their delinquency in conforming to the moral law "I am my brother's keeper," when applied to men and women of color.

Flagrant instances of this anti-social behavior and un-Christian practice may be seen in the position the Negro found himself when the present World War began. When he went to defense industries for jobs, he was either flatly told that he was not wanted or given the run-around. Defense training courses were closed to him; government departments discriminated against him as did private industry; trade unions refused Negroes membership; the armed forces, including the army, navy, merchant marine, and coast guard while giving first-class status to Filipinos and Chinese, put Negroes into segregated and jim-crow divisions. The navy, although making some concessions to the clamor of the Negro people for consideration, still refused to make Negroes commissioned officers. The Red Cross relents and accepts Negro blood, but jim-crows it, and Negro women although accepted in the WAAC's are trained and maintained as segregated units. Doctors of color can only practice on soldiers of color. The great mass of Negroes recruited for the army are placed in labor battalions; a jim-crow school for Negro air pilots is set up at Tuskegee and the policy of segregation is so sharply fixed in the army that Negro and white soldiers hardly realize that they are fighting for the same things, and hence, instead of waiting for combat on the foreign fronts, they go to war with each other on the home front. Negro soldiers are mobbed, shot and killed in Fort Dix, New Jersey; Fort Bragg, North Carolina; Alexandria, Louisiana; Little Rock, Arkansas, and various other sections of the country.

The government sends a Negro expeditionary force to England with its jim-crow pattern. A leaflet is prepared by the War Department and given to white soldiers sent to England informing them what not to do or say lest they insult their white English comrades, but white officers in the South freely

insult Negro soldiers by calling them "niggers" and nothing is done about it.

### ***Executive Order 8802***

Under Executive Order 8802, issued by President Roosevelt on June 25, 1941, a Committee on Fair Employment Practice was established. It is now composed of seven men, Malcolm McLean, President of Hampton Institute, Chairman; David Sarnoff, President of Radio Corporation of America; Milton P. Webster, 1st International Vice-President of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters; Earl Richardson, Lawyer and Alderman of Chicago; Mark Etheridge, Business Manager of the Louisville *Courier Journal*; Philip Murray, President of the CIO; William Green, President of AFL. This Committee has held hearings in Los Angeles, Chicago, New York and Birmingham, Alabama, and plans other hearings for cities in different parts of the country.

As a result of the activity of the FEPC, which investigates charges of discrimination on account of race, color, religion or national origin, a considerable number of defense industries have employed Negro workers and some of the trade unions have relented in their rigid application of the closed shop contract and permitted Negro workers to secure employment. The Committee is handicapped, however, because of two things:

1. It is submerged as a result of an order issued by the President, a few months ago placing it in the War Manpower Commission, under Paul V. McNutt. It is no longer independent with sole responsibility in the President, as it was in the beginning. Now, the Executive Order states that FEPC shall investigate discriminations not only in defense industries but in the government, but if FEPC is attached to a government department, as it is in the War Manpower Commission, subject to direction and supervision by its Chairman, it stands to reason that it cannot carry out the provisions of the Executive Order since it cannot investigate the departments of which it is a part and the head of the Department which has the power of supervision and direction over it.
2. The Fair Employment Practice Committee has never received



adequate funds to provide proper personnel and machinery for policing the Executive Order. White Southern politicians and indifferent Republicans are the cause of it. While it called for a budget of a million and several hundred thousand dollars, it was granted less than \$300,000, which is a definite method of starving FEPC to death. Moreover, in sessions of the FEPC sit representatives of Paul V. McNutt, namely General McSherry and Fowler Harper. This condition destroys the independence of the Committee and impairs its usefulness. Although some headway has been made toward Negroes receiving employment in defense industries, discriminations are still rife against them when they apply for skilled jobs. Moreover, the South makes no pretense of providing training opportunities for Negroes in defense industries although federal moneys are appropriated for this purpose.

### *Negroes and the War*

The question may be raised as to the advisability of the Negroes fighting at this time for their democratic rights, in view of the war. It is my position and the general feeling of practically all Negro leaders throughout the nation that the Negro must fight against discriminations wherever they appear at this time and to insist upon the status of a first-class citizen. We believe that the fight for democracy on the home front is a part of the fight for democracy on the foreign front. It is our position that it is not enough for the United Nations to win a military victory alone for it is possible for the armed forces of the United Nations to prevail and the Anglo-America Empire Systems to remain with their old policies and practices of imperialistic oppression and exploitation of the darker races. We stand for all-out support for the war by the Negro. This he is giving with his life, blood and treasure. We also stand for a fight not only against Hitler in Europe but Hitlerism in America wherever it shows its head. The strength of the underpinnings of democracy will make for a stronger national unity in America, which in turn will give strength to our armed forces. Racial discrimination is not only a sabotage of the struggle of the United Nations but it is treason to democracy.

When we discriminate against Negroes here at home in defense jobs, we discriminate against soldiers and sailors upon the far-flung battle fields of the world and the seven seas. When we deny the Negro the opportunity to build ships, tanks, guns and airplanes, we may be withholding instruments of war from the armed forces or preventing them from reaching our boys in time.

### ***The Test of Democracy***

The Negro today provides the supreme test of American democracy. Yet, the present administration does not seem ready to challenge certain elements in the benighted sections of the south; and while democracy was being trampled upon in the Senate by demagogues like Senator Bilbo of Mississippi, there came no word of public protest from the White House. Surely we have seen no case of Nazism and Fascism or Totalitarianism anywhere in the world that exceeds the demagoguery, intolerance and bigotry and obscurantism that obtained in the Senate when democracy was being murdered by Southern Bourbonism. Although the South has but one-fourth of the population of the United States, it holds 50 per cent of the chairmanships of the United States House of Representatives. Because of a rotten borough system made possible by the poll tax and the white primaries, southern senators and representatives are able to build up seniority and capture the committee chairmanships.

Witness the control of the "white supremacy" bloc over the Senate today; Chairman of the Appropriation Committee is Carter Glass of Virginia; Agriculture, Cotton Ed Smith of South Carolina; of the most important committee on Foreign Relations, Tom Connally of Texas, who with his poll tax philosophy will be one of the outstanding influences at the peace conference to build a new world for democracy. The Chairman of the Finance Committee is George of Georgia; of Territories and Insular Affairs, important because of the global character of the war and of the post-war world, Tydings of Maryland; of the Post Office and Post Roads, McKellar of Tennessee.

In the House of Representatives the control of committees by race-hating politicians is distressing:

The Chairman of the Judiciary Committee is Sumners of Texas, who boasted that he would never permit a hearing of the Anti-Lynching Bill as long as he was Chairman. The Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee is Doughton of North Carolina; of Banking and Currency, Steagall of Alabama; of Agriculture, Fulmer of South Carolina; of Naval Affairs, Vinson of Georgia; of Military Affairs, May of Kentucky. These men have the profoundest contempt for real democracy and for democratic institutions guaranteeing the right of suffrage, trial by jury, right of petition, freedom of press, speech, assembly, —unless these freedoms are reserved for white men only. Even many of the so-called liberal white elements of the south have been subdued by the lynch forces. Men like Virginius Dabney of the *Richmond Times Dispatch*, John Temple Graves, II, of the *Montgomery Advertiser* and Mark Etheridge of the *Louisville Courier-Journal* utterly collapsed when the struggle came to free Odell Waller, and the fight began for Negro rights during the war. Thus the need today for the church to raise the banner for the Brotherhood of man and for the application of Christian principles without regard to race, color, or national origin.

If this war does not lead to racial, economic, political and social equality for the Negro and all of the darker races, it will have been fought in vain and will be only a prelude to a more terrible war between the colored and white races of the world.

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*The third address of the session was given by Abba Hillel Silver, Rabbi of The Temple, Cleveland, Ohio. The subject: "America's Minority Groups in War and Peace."*

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# AMERICA'S MINORITY GROUPS IN WAR AND PEACE

BY ABBA HILLEL SILVER

There is far too much emphasis placed today in our thought and speech on minorities in the United States. Unconsciously we are helping to re-create here the crazy-quilt pattern of the Old World. In one essential regard America always differed from Europe. Europe, for centuries, has been concerned with the problem of minorities. Here we were concerned not with the rights of minorities but with the rights of man. Here we spoke of the inalienable rights of all men, regardless of race, creed and color. Here we prided ourselves on judging a man on the basis of his worth, character and achievement and not on the basis of the group to which he belonged or the religion to which he subscribed. Those we held to be his own personal and private affairs.

America was able to absorb immigrants from a hundred races and nationalities and mold them into first-rate citizens. In every great national crisis, such as this World War and the last, these Americans, immigrants or the sons of immigrants, responded as loyally to the call of duty and sacrifice as did the descendants of the very first immigrants who settled upon these shores. Read the names of the boys who are inducted into the armed services of our country which appear daily in our newspapers, as well as the names of those killed and wounded. These names speak of a hundred minority groups from which those brave young Americans hail, but they also speak of the complete submergence of these local, parochial minority interests and loyalties into the one overwhelming love and devotion to America.

We did not always succeed in wiping out the minority concept in this country. In the case of one important minority group, we failed lamentably. We surrounded the Negroes of the United States with political and economic disabilities. We



segregated and handicapped them as a group. As a result we fought one tragic Civil War, and the problem is far from being solved even today. It is easy to create a minority problem. It is most difficult to solve it. In the long run, the majority suffers as much from minority discrimination as the minority itself.

### *The Tide of Racism*

Why did the tide of racism and anti-Semitism rise in our country and in the world in recent years? What happened? The answer is not far to seek. The tide rose because there were powerful agencies which were intent upon making it rise. Of these, the most powerful is the Nazi regime in Germany. It has fed race hatred throughout the world ever since it came into power. Nazism is a political creed out to conquer the world. It is missionary. It is not content to stay confined within the limits of the land of its origin. It regards itself as a crusading movement for a new order to supplant the present order of society. It declares that the order of things which has prevailed in the Western World ever since the American and French Revolutions is decadent. It must be destroyed. They are out to destroy it. Racial inequality is one of the chief characteristics of the new social order which they hope to establish on the ruins of the old whose foundations were liberty, fraternity and equality.

In the hands of the Nazis, racism has also become a major technique of imperial expansionism. By means of it they hope to create a mood of crisis and conflict within those countries which they have marked out for conquest, and so to undermine their powers of resistance. By disrupting the internal spiritual unity of a nation they prepare it for easier subjugation. Anti-Semitism has thus become part of the strategy of Total War.

Until recent years, the problem of anti-Semitism was not a serious one in the United States. Some religious or racial preju-

dice always existed and it was characterized by local fluctuations of varied intensity, but it was never serious enough to disturb the life of the nation, and to arouse national apprehensions. That it has become serious in recent years is due not to the fact that the people of the United States have suddenly come to a realization that the Jews of America constitute a menace. It is due solely to the fact that the ever-widening circles of politically-motivated anti-Jewish propaganda, originating in Nazi Germany, have finally reached our shores.

The guiding principle is always the same:—inodiate a cause by tagging on to it an unattractive label! It is very serviceable to pin an existing historic prejudice on your opponent. By branding your opponent's cause as Jewish, you give it an unpopular and suspect origin. It looms up as something alien. You are saved the trouble of refuting your opponent's position logically. You score an initial victory of great moment. Bismarck, after he turned reactionary, attacked liberalism by identifying it with the Jews and stimulated a powerful anti-Semitic movement in Germany which produced a voluminous anti-Semitic literature from which the later Nazis borrowed extensively. The same tactics were employed by the Nazis years later to discredit the liberal and radical movements in post-war Germany.

Minorities have been used for such purposes throughout the ages. The great Church Father Tertullian recalls the experiences of the Christian minority in ancient Rome: "If the Tiber rose to the walls of the city, if the inundation of the Nile failed to give the fields enough water, if the heavens did not send rain, if an earthquake occurred, if famine threatened, if pestilence raged, the cry resounded: 'Throw the Christians to the lions!'"

Unless these classic tactics are firmly grasped, Americans will not appreciate what is behind the anti-Semitic movement in the United States, which, at least up to the time of our entry into the war, had made grave inroads in our national life.

### *Racism and Reaction*

Anti-Semitism today is a powerful, perhaps the most powerful, weapon in the hands of economic reaction. It has been and will be increasingly used by all its unscrupulous lackies and henchmen. It has become an accepted technique.

Anti-Semitism before Pearl Harbor was stimulated in the United States in order to confound our national life, and disrupt its unity. It was to pave the way for an ultimate Fascist triumph in the United States. The propaganda device was quite simple: Proclaim from the housetops—"The Philistines are upon thee, Samson! You are being betrayed! The American people is being sold down the river! The international bankers —(and by now, of course, this term has been made synonymous with *Jewish* bankers, for *Christian* international bankers have somehow disappeared) —are driving Americans into war, hoping to profit from the sale of armaments and munitions, and hoping also to avenge themselves on their enemies, the Nazis. The Jews are betraying the United States. The Jews were responsible for the last depression and for all past and present economic ills. You, the American people, are not being told the truth, because your press is controlled by the Jews. So are your movies and your radio. Your government cannot help you because your government, too, is in the hands of Jews, from the President down. . . . The machinery of democracy is no longer capable of saving the American people. If you wish to be saved you must yield all power, temporarily, of course, to us, your saviors, who will rescue you from this dire plot. When the job is done, all your liberties will, of course, be restored to you, and you will live happily ever after. . . ." The same tactics which put the Nazis into power in Germany were being employed in this country on an increasingly large scale. And there are Thyssens here in the United States, as there were in Germany who, rather than see their economic privileges undermined, would welcome the destruction of our free democratic institutions. Some of these

American Thyssens and Fascist fellow-travelers had already been decorated by the Nazis. . . .

Anti-Semitism is today no longer the slightly embarrassing thing that it was in the past—something to be counteracted by easy-going, good-will movements. It is a far more sinister thing. It is a powerful and dangerously imminent threat to American democracy. It is the same sinister force which destroyed one free country after another in Europe. Wherever Fascism is on the march,—anti-Semitism is its vanguard. The shock troops of Fascism are always anti-Semites. By that sign ye shall know them!

### ***What Can Be Done?***

What can be done to counteract this thing? There still remains, of course, the old-fashioned but very dependable method of democratic education. Education still remains the strongest bulwark of a free people. Americans should be educated in the techniques of modern propaganda which have been so skillfully elaborated in our day. Courses in the detection of, and the prophylaxis against false propaganda of all kinds, and particularly race propaganda, should be introduced into the curricula of all of our high schools and colleges. Our people should be made aware of the methods which are being employed and the true character of the organizations and governments which employ them. They should be informed as to how racial and religious antagonisms are aroused and exploited, in order to divide a people, confuse its counsels, and undermine its national resistance to aggression. We have long assumed that education in democracy will somehow take care of itself, as an unconscious by-product of our day-by-day living. This is no longer true. Quite deliberately and specifically we must begin to educate our people anew, and especially our youth, in the principles, practices, advantages and obligations of the democratic way of life.

Propaganda, ever since the last World War, has developed into a new science, a Voodoo science, if you will, but still a



science. It is no longer left to chance. It has been very carefully elaborated, and those who wish to employ it for their special interests know exactly how to compound the ingredients of that intoxicating cup by which the masses are made drunk and inflamed so as to be the more easily pushed in the direction in which the interested parties want them to move. "The driving power of great social change," declared Hitler, "is not insight but hysteria." If you wish to bring about a social revolution, do not rely upon the slow processes of education and evolution. Rely upon hysteria! Inflamm the passions of people, arouse them to a high pitch of passion, fear, or anger, and then you can do with them whatever you wish. By the time they recover from the fumes of your propaganda, they will be faced by your machine guns, if you are clever. . . .

Illiteracy and ignorance used to be the greatest foes of human progress. They are no longer. Mankind has found ways of stamping out illiteracy in very quick order. The real foe of human progress today is the far more subtle and insidious one called propaganda, which employs a bastard literacy, and a venal and corrupt educational process as an important part of its technique. The mind of man is not kept *uninformed* but *misinformed*.

Democracy, generally, should cease to be naive, trusting and doctrinaire. The forces hostile to our way of life and to our free institutions must be continuously exposed. No democracy is immune, as long as it is a democracy, from anti-democratic propaganda, either native or foreign. Forces opposed to democracy will use the very apparatus of democracy, as well as its abundant tolerance, to destroy it. In the face of this, democracy must not remain complacent. It must aggressively and relentlessly expose and harass every form of propaganda which is hostile to our basic conceptions of life and government.

Laws should be enacted — if they do not already exist — against the public vilification of any race or religion, and against the incitement of people against any race or religion.

The most virile and business-like democracy of all—Switzerland—has had such laws for some time. France found it necessary to enact them, but, unfortunately, too late!

Increased opportunities for contact between all racial and religious groups in America for the discussion of their common problems, and for a survey of all areas of friction, are highly desirable. It is a sure way to "plant companionship thick as trees along all the rivers of America"—Walt Whitman's dream.

The times call for frank and honest self-criticism on the part of all, Jews and non-Jews alike, and particularly on the part of those who constitute the majority; for after all, the solution of anti-Semitism lies with them. It would be very helpful if each group would begin to beat its own breast instead of beating its neighbor's breast and would confess "*mea culpa*". . .

What is needed most in order to stem the rising tide of race prejudice which will disfigure our common life, is to discipline ourselves to treat men as *individuals*. It is not an easy thing to do, but we are not concerned here with easy problems or with easy solutions. The chief characteristic of the democratic dogma is the concept of the free human being and his inalienable private rights. Before the rise of democracy in Western Europe, before the Rights of Man were proclaimed, individuals were treated legally, socially, and economically not in relation to themselves but within the framework of an associated life in relation to the *group* to which they belonged—nobleman, cleric, military, peasant. It was a hierarchic, a feudal arrangement of social life. It was from a long experience with that kind of social organization that we have carried over the practice of judging men collectively, within fixed molds. Democracy rediscovered the human being, the individual who derived from his Creator—not from society or from his class—certain fundamental rights which were, accordingly, his inalienably. He is entrenched in his own rights. He is to be judged on the basis of his own worth, merit and ability. He is not to be handi-

capped or advantaged by any fortuitous circumstance of class, creed or color. The very genius of democracy is to treat man on the basis of his inherent humanity, and his inalienable human rights.

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**Report of the Special Seminar on  
"The Spiritual Implications of Race and Culture"**

**Wednesday, December 9, 1942**

**Francis J. McConnell, Bishop of the Methodist Church, presiding**

The discussion was opened by Douglas Horton, Minister of the General Council of the Congregational Christian Churches. He spoke on the subject: "The Ideals We Profess."

"We are passing, these days," he said, "through barbed experiences in which we would rather have not participated. They run a wide gamut. Today we must confine ourselves to problems that are specifically American, particularly to those relating to the Negroes in our country. Here, then, are five aspects of the problem to which we should address ourselves:

- 1—Segregation of Negroes in the armed forces.
- 2—Discrimination against Negroes in employment.
- 3—Disfranchisement of Negro citizens.
- 4—Inequality of opportunity for an education.
- 5—Inferior standards for Negroes in social welfare.

"Negroes are no longer willing to endure these inequities and inequalities. The fighting point has been reached, even though the weapons used may be different from the military.

"What is the Christian ideal as applied to this situation? Politically, it means equality. Economically, it means the end of bi-racism in labor unions and the abolition of the color test in general employment. Socially, it means that no social opportunity open to white people shall be closed to Negro people. Nothing less than these standards can be tolerated.

"It is hard to discover chapter and verse in the Bible to prove its teaching as to human brotherhood. But brotherhood is a clear derivative from its essence. Equality, for example, is not 'self-evident,' but is brought to pass because 'something happened' to make it possible. The democratic ideal comes out of the Christian Gospel, not from human apprehension itself. There is, therefore, a definite connection between preaching the Gospel and the practice of democracy. But the brotherhood implicit in the Gospel is the 'brotherhood of man,' which is broader than the mere 'brotherhood of races.'

"In seeking to convert the Christian ideal into action, 'social artists' are needed rather than 'social absolutists.' We must remember that each single problem is related to a whole social environment, not a partial one. The artist always sees the whole, not merely one part or segment.

"Take the case of an employer who for Christian reasons decides to employ Negroes. At once he runs into difficulties deeply embedded in the local situation and comes to realize that time and circumstances interfere with his effort. The total situation affects the particular one, and the employer finds that his Christian ideal cannot be put into effect unless and until the total situation has been changed. Or, take the problem of the decline of property values when Negroes move into a neighborhood. It is complex and cannot be solved out-of-hand. For in this world one's contact is not between oneself and the other person alone or a single group alone. It is with the whole environment. This means that one cannot act always as he might wish. This the social artist realizes, and he studies ways in which he may make his action effective in view of the total situation.

"At the present time, practically speaking, all efforts to achieve political equality for Negroes are sound, for we have developed the democratic tradition in our political background sufficiently to make this possible. The stream of history has moved far enough to make political equality a realizable ideal in our time. Socially and economically the situation is less clear. But it is easy to drift back into lethargy and inertia when we



encounter difficulties and learn that much patience and careful preparation are still necessary. For this reason we should, in season and out, carry on the effort to educate society as we find it, to higher ethical levels. Our job is to lift the ethical standard of the white man until we who are white and striving to be Christian can be as generous to our Negro brother as ideally we wish to be.

"The church is of all institutions and agencies the instrument for doing this: to protect the people who have ideals in their convictions against the prejudices and pressures of the outside world. The church is the 'social enclave' to give strength for difficult days and situations. We must find ways and means for making our churches demonstration-centers of the kind of life we wish prevailed throughout society. Meanwhile, however, we must face the complexities of the problem. For example, adults whose children are grown can act more freely and readily than those with young or adolescent children who are living at home. Yet all who are able should serve as pioneers."

When Dr. Horton had concluded, Emory Ross introduced the resource leaders. Among them were, Mrs. Sadie T. N. Alexander, M. Searle Bates, Mrs. F. S. Bennett, T. T. Brumbaugh, George E. Haynes, E. Stanley Jones, Mrs. L. K. Kyles, Timothy Tingfang Lew, George Rundquist, David S. Sims, Charles H. Wesley and Horace A. White.

The attendance was large, filling the room to overflowing.

Horace A. White of Detroit arose to speak in reply to Dr. Horton. He said that he could not understand what Dr. Horton meant by saying: "You can take greater responsibility in social relations when you do not have the responsibility for children." If this is so, he declared, we might as well go home. He then went on to describe the situation in Detroit which, as 'the arsenal of democracy' so-called, has now more than one million new job holders. There are 163,000 Negroes in Detroit, along with 500,000 white people of southern background. Twenty-five years ago, he said, Detroit had no real race problem, but now it is acute. And, he pointed out, this problem is

fundamentally economic. He spoke of police brutality, of injustice before the law, of the bad housing with which Negroes have had to put up because of the resistance of realtors and property owners to improvement or to the moving of Negroes into better neighborhoods. Obviously, he reiterated, the reasons are economic. He objected to the tendency on the part of religious people to rationalize the problem and try to make it appear to be a matter of 'intercultural relations.' The church can greatly assist, he said, but only if it is realistic enough to see the problem as it is and attack it where it can be dealt with practically.

George Rundquist next reported on the work of the Federal Council and Home Missions Council Committee for the Relocation of American Japanese. Mr. Rundquist is a businessman who has volunteered his services in this field. He said that the acceptance of people of Japanese ancestry in this country had not been accompanied by economic equality, and that the present situation is a direct result. The problem of the American Japanese, Mr. Rundquist implied, is basically economic.

Mrs. Alexander, a brilliant lawyer and partner with her husband in their law firm in Philadelphia, said that discrimination against Negroes in the eastern United States is in many respects as great as in the South. Are Christians willing, she asked, to make the sacrifices necessary to bring about humanity and equality? If we believe what we claim to believe, she declared, we must be ready to die for our belief. She recalled that a Commission from Japan some years ago had reported negatively to their government on whether the greatness of the United States derived from Christianity. The significance of this statement was clear.

President Wesley of Wilberforce University said that the eastern and mid-western sections of the country are becoming similar to the southern area in respect to Negro-white relations. Thus he bore out Mrs. Alexander. Because of this, he said, Negroes in the East and Middle West are organizing many kinds of agencies to establish and preserve their freedom.

"Race," he declared, "is nothing but a sort of political and social myth to keep us apart, propagated by demagogues for their own ends." He insisted that the church is not courageous enough to put up a real fight for racial justice. What about a crusade? Must education, as Dr. Horton implied, be all? If white Christians do not do what is necessary, then Negroes will take an aggressive lead themselves. "We expect the liberals at least to stand with us," he said. What the Negro needs is faithful, loyal martyr-like friends who know how to develop the life of the Negro people—not mainly in the interest of Negroes but in the interest of America and democracy. "Let us get out of our minds this idea of race—these caricatures that come to us in the movies and over the radio. Let us think of people as individuals, not as minorities, not as groups."

Mrs. Bennett then spoke of the one-third of a million American Indians who are the victims of indifference and carelessness. They represent the plight of minorities that do not push themselves. She described the long history of arbitrary treatment, calling attention to the fact that these people are still so-called "wards" of the War Department despite the fact that they are citizens. She concluded by saying that an effort is under way to terminate the 389 "treaties" with the Indians and to place them in a normal relationship with the rest of American society.

Mrs. Kyles said that the Negro, the Indian and the white groups present between them a major social problem. (She might also have mentioned the American Japanese.) To deal with such a problem a "Fifth Freedom" is required: namely, freedom from ignorance. She drew a panoramic picture of the economic and cultural life in the deep South which showed how complex and confusing the situation is. Yet in certain respects, she said, the South is far ahead of the North in attacking the problem in spite of the widespread ignorance of its real meaning and difficulty. "We ourselves are often ignorant when we try to teach others not to be ignorant." "One thing necessary," she said, "is a relaxation of the tensions between the races." "Be

natural—and usually nothing serious happens,” she declared.

Mr. Bates then spoke of the intercultural and interracial problem in the Far East. The color and race situation is interlocked with the problem of imperialism and world order. Since 1500, imperialism from the West has spread through the Orient and is a clear demonstration that western imperialism has been, in essence, a movement of white culture toward the dominance of all other cultures. “What is the meaning of our talk about a just peace and a world order,” he asked, “if we are only to carry out the principle of race discrimination into that order?” We have much to undo. Our greatest present opportunity is to capitalize upon the comradeship of the war on the same side with China and India.

Bishop Sims then spoke of the destructive social effects of race prejudice. “Race prejudice limits opportunity for Negroes and hence produces ignorance and moral degeneracy to an astounding degree. Race prejudice produces liars, thieves and hypocrites out of minority groups. But it also reacts. It produces hatred on the part of the victim. Negroes have learned to hate white people because they are white. Race prejudice breeds suspicion on the part of Negroes. The Negro believes very little in the white man’s Christianity. This is particularly true of the young Negro who has opportunity to observe extensively.”

“I am sorry,” he said, “for the white man who has race prejudice. It makes him weak. It makes him spineless. It warps his judgments because they are not reasoned but prejudiced. Hence he often takes light for darkness and vice versa. White boys and girls should be saved from the disease of race prejudice which is devitalizing to them.

“During the great contagion of race prejudice the church has shown many aggravated symptoms of infection. The church has grown coward. What great crusade has the church made in behalf of minority race groups during the last half century?”

Mr. Haynes then arose to defend the thesis that racial prob-



lems are not entirely economic but have cultural and spiritual roots as well.

Bishop McConnell said that it would not do, however, to blink the economic motive.

Mr. White declared, "There is no value in a conference of this sort unless it takes full account of the economic motive."

Mrs. Alexander moved a recommendation that institutions, hospitals, schools and colleges, church agencies and other similar organizations be requested to integrate Negroes into their staffs, faculties and student bodies. This recommendation was unanimously adopted.

After a somewhat extended discussion of the relationship between the economic and other factors in the racial problem, Mr. Crain of the Disciples Church arose to express disappointment at what he felt was the lack of methods of procedure in all the suggestions made in the seminar. He declared that little had been suggested except by implication. He then recommended that the government be importuned by the church to form a committee of representative citizens of both races to investigate conditions in the camp and war industry areas.

Mr. Stanley Jones brought the discussion to an end with an account of his experiences in the field of race relations on his campaigns over the country.

Following the adjournment of the seminar there was animated discussion amongst informal groups which continued until the room was required for another gathering.

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## WHAT CAN THE CHURCH DO?

1. Observe Race Relations Sunday, February 14—not simply with professions of belief in racial equality but also by specific projects to implement these professions.
2. Observe Brotherhood Week, sponsored by the National Conference of Christians and Jews, February 19 to 28. Churches and ministers may well take the lead in sponsoring community-wide observance of the activities suggested. Material may be secured from the National Conference of Christians and Jews, 381 Fourth Avenue, New York City.
3. Set up inter-racial congregational meetings and form committees to study and act on employment opportunities, housing conditions, health measures, educational standards and in other spheres where racial discrimination exists.
4. Find out whether Negroes in your town are adequately represented on the following community agencies, and if not, secure such representation: school boards, school teaching staffs, juries, Civilian Defense committees, Community Chest committees, U.S.O., Red Cross, hospital staffs.
5. Print in church bulletins the President's Executive Order 8802, with a description of the effect of race prejudice on national unity and the production of munitions for the armed forces, and how it plays into the hands of the Axis powers.
6. Demand the abolition of the segregation of Negro blood by the Red Cross, since there are no scientific grounds for such discrimination.
7. Call for the abolition of discrimination against Negroes in government offices and positions.
8. Call for the abolition of all forms of discrimination in the armed forces.
9. Form a church committee for the purpose of supporting the Anti-Poll Tax Bill which is being presented in Congress, and of fighting for the abolition of the white primaries that obtain in eleven southern states.
10. Call for membership of Negroes on the peace commission of the United States which will help to form the post-war world.

11. Improve the effectiveness of educational methods and materials in developing inter-racial understanding and cooperation, making better use of educational psychology.
12. Cleanse its own temples of the sin of race discrimination, segregation and "jim crow," and thereby make itself more fit to minister to the soul and spirit of Man, not the white man, the yellow man, the brown man, the red man, the black man,—but Man.
13. Support the denominational and Federal Council Departments of Race Relations.
14. Become a crusading church—to make the Christian ethic into a Christian dynamic.

Write to the following agencies for information and suggestions for action:

FAIR EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES COMMITTEE, Washington, D. C.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE, 69 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

NATIONAL NEGRO CONGRESS, 290 Lenox Avenue, New York City.

NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE, 1133 Broadway, New York City, or the branch in your city.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF CHRISTIANS AND JEWS, 381 Fourth Avenue, New York City.

FEDERAL COUNCIL OF THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN AMERICA, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York City.

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## IN CONCLUSION

BY EMORY ROSS

The church teaches brotherhood. All too often it practices segregation. It has become universal geographically. Culturally it shows splits due to prejudice and selfishness.

Thus the spiritual implications of race and culture confront the church in every country in the world. They are practical ecumenical problems—intimate but universal, old, hard.

There was a day when America could send Christian missionaries overseas to preach and for the most part to practice Christian brotherhood, without our domestic failures damaging our foreign witness. That day is gone. It went out as world travel, news services, student exchange, radio, air transport, movies and television came in.

There was a day when America could give generously in a crisis for overseas peoples and win gratitude despite exclusion acts, race barriers, lynchings, extra-territoriality and general policies of white dominance. That day is gone. Millions for China relief cannot now suffice to hold a Chinese mission indefinitely in Washington for snubbing and ignoring.

It was therefore of high importance that at the meetings in Cleveland, the first of their kind for the North American church, representatives of the whole church should face the spiritual implications of race and culture. For those implications are not racial or social, they are not local or national; they are not foreign or home. They are universal—in every country and in nearly every problem of every country.

In some respects the most difficult question the world will face as the "shooting" phases of the present struggle begin to subside will be how to hold enough of the "united" nations together to plan and agree and act for a universally livable world. So far we are united seemingly for two things: for resisting and for freedom.

To resist and to win the battle is a primary need and it certainly will be met, though at an additional cost we cannot now compute.

But the effort required to resist and win will leave us tired and spent—the victors almost as much as the vanquished. More, we are likely to be fed-up, irritated, critical, disillusioned, suspicious and bitter in greater or less degree not only about our erstwhile enemies but about many or all of our allies. They might feel even more strongly about us. The current North Africa relations are complicated and serious in all truth, but



they are relatively simple and confined compared to what world relations will be. And moreover, to aid now in their solution they have the powerful external pressure of continuing battle. Were that suddenly removed North Africa could become a major menace in its complex of political, economic, religious, racial and military problems. After a while the external pressure of continuing battle will be removed in North Africa and everywhere, one hopes. Then what?

Then freedom. Freedom for Poles and Papuans and Japanese? For Brazilians and Eskimos and Americans? For British and Chinese and Burmans? For Bantu and Germans and Indians? For blacks and whites and reds? For Greeks, Romans, gentiles, Jews?

Freedom? Therein lies spiritual implications of race and culture. Therein lies a test of world Christianity. But therein lies chaos if Christians let Christianity fail.

1. For who is free when innocence is seized?
2. What nation is free when it must hold a second and a third?
3. What color is free when it must shackle another?

To free itself America must free its colors and its classes in practical and effective ways beyond what it has yet done. And it must join in class-less and race-less action for ordering a free world of all races and all cultures.

"In the words of our President," said Under-Secretary of State Sumner Welles, "'We shall win this war, and in victory we shall seek not vengeance but the establishment of an international order in which the spirit of Christ shall rule the hearts of men and of nations.'" Mr. Welles concluded, "We won't get a free world any other way."

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- The Role of the Races in Our Future Civilization.* Symposium edited by Harry W. Laidler. Pamphlet of the League for Industrial Democracy, 112 East 19th St., New York. 50c. Statements of thirty authorities on the total problem of inter-racial relations from a global standpoint.
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